Little Mills, Richmond Co., N.C.
Oct. 6, 1857.

Miss. Flax:

I send you a piece of my dear Sister's hair. It affords me pleasure to be able to do so. I was absent from home when your note came. In the midst of my afflictions, and when I was already crushed to earth I received a letter from my brother, who was at the Virginia Springs with his little daughters, stating that they were both sick with fever, and desiring if possible, for me to go to his aid. His wife at the time was in Miss. on a visit to her parents. I was already almost exhausted with care and grief, but felt it my duty as well as inclination to go. I repaired to them immediately. I endeavored to be prepared for the worst, for knowing that the children were extremely delicate I little expected they would recover from the dreadful disease. When I reached them one had improved considerably, the other the oldest, (Lizzie) still quite sick. I remained three weeks before we could venture to move her. And even on our way home we were frequently between hope and despair, but at length arrived safely. We got to my brother's a few days ago. She is now much better, has

improved rapidly within a few days and will care will recover. My brother had never imparted the sad news from home to them until a few days before I reached them. And when I met them the poor little creatures with their hands around my neck, asked me "if it were so." "If there were no mistake in what we had written to their Pa." I had to tell them it was too true and it seemed that it would break their little hearts. But Providence has wisely provided it so that the bitterness of grief with children is generally of short duration. My brother's wife had met him a day or two before I arrived. My poor mother has spent the time with a brother and sister who live in the neighborhood. She is now staying with my brother. Though bowed down with grief, her health has been tolerably good. We have still a good deal of the fever (Typhoid) on the plantation, two cases proving fatal in my absence. My mother and all of us desire to express our gratitude for the sympathy and kind feelings extended in your notes. You can well appreciate the weight of the blow we have received. As for me it does seem even yet that it will crush me. I struggle to bear up, but I am overcome. Home is not home, nor does any place afford relief. Fortunately I suppose, I am necessarily pretty constantly employed, but yet it is merely formal or mechanical, for whatever my occupation be, even

in conversation, my mind is far away with my favorite sister. I lived for her, and the greatest enjoyment of my life (without qualification) has been in endeavoring to contribute to her happiness. She was identified with every thing I did. And she more than repaid me with all the tenderness of a sister's love. Never did sister love brother more. Some of her last words was the expression of that love. With such an influence exerted upon me how could I have lived as has been my past life? But I am undone, I have no heart nor soul for any thing. All is dark before me. I hope I do not rebel against the decree of heaven. I strive to view it in the proper light. I know she is happy in a better world. Were I possessed of a well founded hope of that world it would sustain me, but without such a support my situation is indeed sad. After leaving the plantation every evening and going to my brothers (where I spend my disturbed & sleepless nights) and finding the family seated around the fireside, there is a vacancy in the circle which often overcomes me, & my only refuge is to retire and give vent to my feelings. But I will not obtrude my private griefs farther, & yet I do not feel that is altogether obtrusion, though I have written a good deal connected with family affairs, and have indulged my own feelings

It is a melancholy pleasure to give expression even to such sad feelings, to dear friends, though my heart be full, and my face bathed in tears when I commit such feelings to paper. My cousin, Miss Beverly, who was with us a good deal before I left home, has afforded me more comfort than all others. She was, as you know, with us in the trying scene, heard all, saw all. But she is now in So. Car. and I can only communicate with her by letter. She was always dear to us all, more so now. Our friends and relations all, however, know well how to appreciate our melancholy situation and are very kind in their efforts to mitigate our grief. May God give me strength to bear the weight of the affliction. And though the blow be crushing I can see that it was even in mercy dealt: for though the one has been taken from the family, dearest to our hearts, yet that one was best fitted for the world of bliss. And it is great comfort to know that the change has been a happy one for her, though the rest of us are left with our hearts burdened with sorrow.

I also send you a copy of the obituary notice of my dear sister, thinking that probably you may not have seen a paper in which it was published. If not, as it contains a detail of some of the particulars connected with her last moments, I know you would be glad to read it. Again let us return our gratitude for your very kind sympathy. My mother desires to be kindly remembered, give my kindest regards to your mother and all of the family, and believe me to be

Your true friend, B. F. Little.